United Nations A/55/742–S/2001/71

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
23 January 2001

Original: English

General Assembly
Fifty-fifth session
Agenda item 164
Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Security Council
Fifty-sixth year

Letter dated 23 January 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I wish to draw your attention to two recent acts of Palestinian terrorism directed against Israeli civilians.

On 17 January 2000, Israeli soldiers discovered the bullet-riddled body of Ofir Rahum, a 16-year-old Israeli youth from the city of Ashkelon. This heinous and premeditated murder was conceived and implemented over an extended period of time. Several weeks prior to his murder, Rahum befriended a young Palestinian woman, Amna Mona Jawad, after corresponding with her over the Internet. Jawad posed as an American tourist in order to lure Rahum from his home in Ashkelon to Jerusalem for a meeting. Jawad then drove the innocent teenager to a pre-arranged location near El-Bireh, on the outskirts of the Palestinian-controlled town of Ramallah. Upon reaching the designated spot, Jawad exited the vehicle in which they had been travelling, another vehicle approached, and three members of the Tanzim paramilitary group shot Rahum more than 15 times, mutilating his body beyond recognition. Rahum's body was then dumped in another location where it was subsequently found.

This cruel and cold-blooded murder of a blameless 16-year-old boy by Palestinian gunmen comes just days after the murder of another Israeli civilian, Ronni Tsalah, who was killed by terrorists near his home in Kfar Yam. Soldiers of the Israel Defence Forces discovered Tsalah's body on 15 January after having been informed by his family of his abduction. The remains of Tsalah's car, which had been burned and wrecked by a Palestinian mob, were later found in the Palestinian-controlled town of Khan Yunis.

It must be stressed that, as Israel works to maintain security cooperation with the Palestinian Authority and to contain violence directed against Israeli soldiers and civilians, terror attacks and other violent provocations continue. The murders of Ofir Rahum and Ronni Tsalah come amid a continuing wave of Palestinian violence and terrorism which I have detailed in a number of letters, most recently of 28 December 2000 (A/55/719-S/2000/1252), 22 November 2000 (A/55/641-S/2000/1114) and 20 November 2000 (A/55/634-S/2000/1108).

01-22410 (E) 230101

As these letters have shown, many terrorist attacks have been carried out by members of the Tanzim, the paramilitary wing of Chairman Arafat's own Fatah faction. Despite signed agreements reached with Israel, the Palestinian leadership has failed to disarm the Tanzim, members of which carried out the reprehensible attack of 20 November 2000 on a bus-load of Israeli schoolchildren. The freedom of action that the Tanzim and other terrorist groups enjoy in the territories under control of the Palestinian Authority has directly led to the violence and terrorism we are now experiencing.

Moreover, these murders illustrate, yet again, that the current unrest is hardly a popular civilian uprising, but rather a calculated campaign waged not only by civilians, but by violent terrorist cells and armed militias, inspired by the Palestinian leadership and encouraged by their official media outlets.

Israel reiterates its call upon the Palestinian Authority to abide by its commitments to put an end to terrorist activity and other forms of violence emanating from the territory under its control.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 164, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yehuda **Lancry**
Permanent Representative